



### **Somaliland Relations with Taiwan: A Shared Commitment to Democracy**

Dear friends,

Earlier this month, I was honored to join with hundreds of Taiwan's closest friends to celebrate the Republic of China's National Day at the historic Twin Oaks estate. At a time of heightened geopolitical tension and uncertainty, I was personally inspired to see so many people come together in solidarity with Taiwan and in celebration of shared democratic values.

As one of the two governments in Africa that recognize Taiwan, the Republic of Somaliland has a special responsibility to support Taiwan during challenging periods. In both Washington and Hargeisa, Taiwan's 111<sup>th</sup> National Day was an opportunity to reiterate our commitment to a strategic partner.

I look forward to the next opportunity to celebrate the resilience of Taiwan's democracy and offer below a review of our bilateral relationship.

Warm regards,

Bashir Goth, Somaliland Representative to the United States



**VP Abdirahman Saylici** ✓  
@VPsomaliland

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On behalf of Somaliland, I congratulate the people of Taiwan on the occasion of your national day. We have achieved so much together to advance our shared priorities, based on common values and rooted in democracy.

We look forward to continued cooperation & friendship

@iingwen



4:06 PM · Oct 9, 2022 · Twitter for Android

*Vice President Abdirahman Ismail Saylici Expresses Solidarity with Taiwan at National Day Celebration in Hargeisa*



This month, Somaliland Vice President Abdirahman Ismail Saylici joined more than 200 government, civil society, and private sector leaders at an event at the Taiwanese mission in Hargeisa. In remarks made at the event, he noted:

“As you know, Taiwan and Somaliland have established an important and deep-rooted relations. We share many common values such as democracy, peace and stability, and respect for human rights. And we are committed on the Somaliland side to further solidify this relationship. We are delighted to see Taiwan, which is one of the most developed countries in the world, assisting Somaliland in different sectors such as social development, security, democracy, as well as training in capacity building and good governance. We are very thankful to them. For our side, we are against anything that harms the dignity and sovereignty of Taiwan. We fully support any measures that they take to safeguard their independence and sovereignty.”

The Vice President congratulated Taiwan on their “tenacity and persistence” in their ongoing diplomatic efforts to achieve recognition by the international community and membership in international organizations, which serves as a model for Somaliland in its respective advocacy campaign.



## *Somaliland Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Visits Taiwan*

In February, Somaliland's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Dr. Essa Kayd, traveled to Taiwan in a milestone diplomatic visit, during which he met with Taiwanese [President Tsai Ing-wen](#), as well as [Foreign Affairs Minister Jaushieh Joseph Wu](#). Dr. Kayd also met with [CECI Engineering](#), a Taiwanese company that is leading joint infrastructure projects in Somaliland. On the final day of the visit, Dr. Kayd participated in a press conference, during which he touted the two countries' shared values such as "democracy, advancement of human rights, and women's empowerment."

Watch the full speech [here](#) and read additional coverage from the visit:

- **Reuters:** ['Born free': Somaliland says China can't dictate to it over Taiwan](#) (February 11, 2022)
- **The Associated Press:** [Taiwan, Somaliland ties growing despite diplomatic isolation](#) (February 9, 2022)
- **Taiwan News:** [Somaliland cabinet ministers arrive in Taiwan](#) (February 9, 2022)
- **South China Morning Post:** [Somaliland touts oil and shared values as it offers Taiwan gateway into Africa](#) (February 9, 2022)

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# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## *Somaliland-Taiwan Partnership Spotlighted in The Wall Street Journal*

A recent article in *The Wall Street Journal* highlighted the various complicated geopolitical pros and cons of an aligned partnership with Somaliland, underscoring Somaliland's enduring relationship with Taiwan as an example of its moral strength in foreign relations. The piece detailed Somaliland's rationale and process in initiating diplomatic relations with Taiwan, noting that, "Few African regions have the nerve to say no to China, whose state-owned companies have blanketed the continent with sprawling seaports, sleek airport terminals,



smooth highways—and soaring debts. Somaliland is one of the few, one of two remaining Taiwanese diplomatic outposts in sub-Saharan Africa.” This is contrasted with Somalia’s growing ties with the People’s Republic of China, which has donated, “armored personnel carriers, ambulances, water trucks and land mine detectors,” while deepening political relations with Mogadishu. Somaliland has chosen a different path; as articulated by Foreign Minister Essa Kayd, Somaliland is “open to all bilateral relations we can have with any country, but it has to be unconditional, no strings attached...We’re not going to allow anyone to dictate who we can have a relationship with.” According to the *Journal’s* reporting, when diplomatic relations were first established, “Beijing offered to build roads and airports if Somaliland shunned Taiwan. The Somalilanders wouldn’t budge.” [Read more](#)

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### *Somaliland and Taiwan Discuss Oil Drilling Expedition in 2023*

Somaliland Vice President Abdirahman Abdillahi Ismail (Sayli'i), Minister of Energy and Minerals Abdillahi Farah Abdi, and other officials recently met with officials from Taiwan OPIC. Discussions between the two parties centered on OPIC’s plans to drill Somaliland’s first oil well in 2023. Following the meeting, the Office of the Taiwanese Representative to



Somaliland released a tweet stating, "It is prospective that Taiwan OPIC & Genel Energy's exploration in Somaliland is drilling an oil well to bring more foreign investors. This index of investment also indicates that SMD fully controls its sovereignty & land resources which is pivotal to bring more investment. #2023Q4." [Read more](#)



We thank TAITRA & the Ministry of Economic Affairs Bureau of Foreign Trade to host Taiwan-Africa Market Networking Luncheon today. As we presented the economic & trade potential of Somaliland we urge Somaliland business to make use of Taiwan's importance manufacturing industry.



6:11 AM · Oct 21, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



Ministry of Trade and Tourism  
@SL\_MoTT

@SL\_MoTT minister @MinisterSaajin & @Taiwan\_SLD Rep Amb @AllenCLou1 commissioned the launch of East Africa-Taiwan Week - Somaliland B2B Meeting with the aim of fostering economic & trade interactions between Taiwan & Somaliland for win-win collaboration.



2:53 PM · Oct 11, 2022 · Twitter for Android



*Somaliland Official Delivers Keynote Speech at the Taiwan-Africa Market Networking Luncheon*

Director-General of Somaliland's Ministry of Trade and Tourism, Abdirashid Ibrahim Abdirahman, delivered the keynote speech at the Taiwan-Africa Market Networking Luncheon earlier this month. The luncheon was held in Taipei and was organized by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) and the Taiwanese Ministry of Economic Affairs' Bureau of Foreign Trade. The event drew the attendance of more than 100 Taiwanese enterprises who are interested in capitalizing on Africa's economic potential. In his remarks, Director-General Abdirahman shared that Somaliland is ready to be a gateway to Africa through its strategic geopolitical location and its modernized trade infrastructure, including the expanded Berbera Port, Berbera Corridor, and the Berbera Free Economic Zone.

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## *Background on Somaliland-Taiwan Relations*

In 2020, Somaliland and Taiwan signed a historic agreement to establish representative offices in each other's capitals for the purpose of strengthening relations and exploring closer ties. At the [opening](#) of Somaliland's office in Taipei, Taiwan Foreign Minister Joseph Wu emphasized his country's enthusiasm in "exploring common interests and mutual benefits" with Somaliland. "We both face external pressures. But both are proud of our sovereignty and ready to defend it," he said.

Speaking with media about the opening, Somaliland's chief representative in Taiwan Mohamed Omar Hagi Mohamoud said: "Other countries cannot dictate to Somaliland what Somaliland wants to do and who Somaliland makes relations with."

Our partnership has been advanced over the past two years through:

- Cooperation on agriculture, education, energy, fisheries, health, information and communications, and mining, including:
  - A [joint agreement](#) solidifying coordination on energy and minerals resources sharing; and
  - A [cooperation pact](#) to develop agreements on fishing, livestock, husbandry, agriculture production, and research and development.
- Unwavering diplomatic backing on the international stage, including Somaliland's [open letter](#) to the World Health Organization in support of Taiwan's plea for membership.



- Support in ensuring fair elections through effective voting systems, notably Taiwan's [donation](#) of US\$2M worth of Biometrics Voter Verification Systems to Somaliland;
- Launch of the [Somaliland Innovation Zone](#), which serves as a hub for information communication and technology training;
- An [MOU](#) signed by the Changhua Christian Hospital, Fu Jen Catholic University, and the Edna Adan University & Hospital to promote shared knowledge and expertise between medical professionals in both countries;
- [Scholarships](#) granted to students from Somaliland to attend university in Taiwan;
- A [trade expo](#) hosted by Somaliland to promote economic cooperation between the two countries; and
- A generous [pledge](#) of US\$500,000 from the Taiwanese government to help the victims of the devastating April 2022 fire at Hargeisa's crucial Waheen market.



Office of the Somaliland Representative in the United States

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